

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An apparatus comprising at least one windage plate adapted for placement adjacent at least one rotatable surface that is at least partially surrounded by a shroud surface, the plate comprising:

an inner circumference that is in close proximity to an inner edge of the at least one rotatable surface;

an outer circumference that is adjacent the shroud surface; and

an edge surface that extends between the inner circumference and the outer circumference of the plate and configured to extend adjacent a movement path of an access element across the rotatable surface, said edge surface supporting a ramp structure adapted to receivingly support said access element at a position away from the rotatable surface;

wherein the edge surface is characterized as a selected one of a leading edge and a trailing edge, wherein the leading edge and the trailing edge cooperate to form a gap area to permit access for the access element; and

wherein the ramp structure is supported by said leading edge so that fluidic currents established by rotation of the rotatable surface pass the access element immediately prior to passing the ramp structure.

2. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the windage plate is configured coaxially adjacent and substantially parallel to said rotating element.

3. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the rotatable surface is characterized as a recording surface of a data recording disc and the access element is characterized as a data transducing head of a data storage device.

4. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the access element is hydrodynamically supported by fluidic currents established by rotation of the rotatable surface.

5-7. (canceled).

8. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~5~~1, wherein at least a selected one of the leading and trailing edges comprise a dam comprising a localized increase in thickness as compared to remaining portions of the plate to restrict fluidic flow of fluidic currents established by rotation of said rotatable surface.

9. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim ~~5~~1, wherein at least a selected one of the leading and trailing edges comprises a tapered surface comprising a localized decrease in thickness as compared to remaining portions of the plate.

10. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the rotatable surface is characterized as a disc surface having an innermost diameter (ID) and an outermost diameter (OD), and wherein the ramp structure is disposed adjacent a selected one of the ID and OD.

11. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the ramp structure comprises an inclined surface which is skewed with respect to the movement path of the access element so that the access element passes along the inclined surface as the ramp structure receives said element.

12. (canceled).

13. (currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

- at least one rotatable surface surrounded at least partially by a shroud surface;
- an access element moveable along a movement path adjacent the at least one rotatable surface;
- a stationary, extending windage plate adjacent the at least one rotatable surface comprising an inner circumference that is in close proximity to an inner edge of the at least one rotatable surface, an outer circumference adjacent the shroud surface and an edge surface disposed adjacent the movement path that extends between the inner circumference and the outer circumference, wherein the edge surface is characterized as a selected one of a leading edge and a trailing edge, wherein the leading edge and the trailing edge cooperate to form a gap area to permit access for the access element; and
- a ramp structure supported by the edge surface which receivingly supports the access element at a position away from the rotatable surface, wherein the ramp structure is supported by said leading edge so that fluidic currents established by rotation of the rotatable surface pass the access element immediately prior to passing the access element.

14. (original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the rotatable surface is characterized as a recording surface of a data recording disc and the access element is characterized as a data transducing head of a data storage device.

15. (original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the access element is hydrodynamically supported by fluidic currents established by rotation of the rotatable surface.

16. (canceled).

17. (original) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the rotatable surface is characterized as a disc surface having an innermost diameter (ID) and an outermost diameter (OD), and wherein the ramp structure is disposed adjacent a selected one of the ID and OD.

18. (original) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the ramp structure comprises an inclined surface which is skewed with respect to the movement path of the access element so that the access element passes along the inclined surface as the ramp structure receives said element.

19. (canceled).

20. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the inner circumference of the plate comprises a ~~non-continuous~~, circular inner circumference and the outer circumference of the plate comprises a ~~non-continuous~~, circular outer circumference.

21. (new) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein at least a selected one of the leading and trailing edges comprise a dam comprising a localized increase in thickness as compared to remaining portions of the plate to restrict fluidic flow of fluidic currents established by rotation of said rotatable surface.

22. (new) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein at least a selected one of the leading and trailing edges comprises a tapered surface comprising a localized decrease in thickness as compared to remaining portions of the plate.